

## SOCIETY MEETING OF FEBRUARY 17, 1988

To a connoisseur of entomological field trips, success is dependent upon proper preparation. According to Dr. Erwin "Duke" Elsner, Extension Research Entomologist at Rutgers University, a field trip is not a field trip unless one has an old beat-up car that can withstand being mired in mud or rolling over in a ditch. Malignant rust around the wheel wells, dents in the fenders, and a loose tail pipe are sure signs of the perfect vehicle that will last for 230,000 miles and can be affectionately called "Mule". Equally important is one's choice of collecting companions. No "stick-in-the-mud" or "wet blankets" please! An adventurous spirit is required to scale cliffs, traverse quaking bogs, or bushwhack through blackberry thickets in pursuit of six-legged beasts. Directions to such exotic habitats are important. The memorability of a field trip is greatly enhanced by the "quality" of map used. Getting lost is absolutely essential. Especially sought are hand-drawn, scaleless, wrinkled maps on which the restricted habitat is marked, like Black Beard's treasure, with an "X" by the previous treasure hunter whose memory has failed in the 20 years since his last visit. Preferably private and public lands are not distinguished and the most difficult path to the prime collecting spot is detailed. But a map is not enough. No field trip can be taken without appropriate gear. Every eventuality should be anticipated - nets, light traps, waders, cameras, repellants, etc. The only limitations are the imagination - Mule's capacity. Such are the "Pleasures of the Field Trip" described by Dr. Elsner. The humor was not lost on the 13 members and 7 guests whose laughter and smiles revealed familiarity with similar experiences from their own field trips. Clearly a successful field trip does not require specimens. It is the pursuit that counts and is recounted.

The continuing saga of the Cynthia Moth, *Samia cynthia*, in Philadelphia was a subject of discussion in notes of local entomological interest before Dr. Elsner's talk. (See Ent. News 98(3): 150 (1987)). The members and guests at the meeting held at the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia were heartened to learn from Dr. Kenneth Frank that extensive searches have turned up populations both in northern and southern parts of the city. It is ironic that we should wish to exterminate the Gypsy Moth but be concerned with the extinction of the Cynthia Moth, another introduced species. Dr. Frank reported that cocoons of the Cecropia Moth, *Hyalophora cecropia*, were particularly common on wild cherry along railroad right of ways in the city.

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